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PSYCHODIAGNOSTICS OF RELIGIOUS COPING STRATEGIES

The paper characterizes the adaptation of Assessment of Beliefs and Behaviors in Coping. Its validity and reliability are shown. The scales of religious copings have been studied, namely: "Religion as a source of personal relationship with a higher power", "Religion as a source of worldview that makes sense of life", "Religion as a source of a sense of control in life", "Religion as a source of a sense of community", "Religion as a source of a sense of community", "Religion as a source of a sense of comfort".

Keywords: religious coping, beliefs and behaviors in coping, religiousness.

О.І. Кузнецов

ПСИХОДІАГНОСТИКА РЕЛІГІЙНИХ КОПІНГІВ

Стаття характеризує адаптацію оцінки вірувань та поведінки у копінгу. Показана її валідність та надійність. Охарактеризовано шкали методики релігійних копінгів, а саме: "Релігія як джерело особистих відносин з вищими силами", "Релігія як джерело світогляду, що дарує сенс життя", "Релігія як джерело почуття контролю в житті", "Релігія як джерело почуття спільності", "Релігія як джерело почуття комфорту", "Релігія як джерело структурування життя".

Ключові слова: релігійна боротьба, вірування та поведінка у справі, релігійність.

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ПСИХОДИАГНОСТИКА РЕЛИГИОЗНЫХ КОПИНГОВ

В статье дается характеристика адаптации методики для оценки верований и поведения в копинге. Показана ее валидность и надежность. Охарактеризованы шкалы методики религиозных копингов, а именно: "Религия как источник личных отношений с высшими силами", "Религия как источник мировоззрения, которая дарит смысл жизни", "Религия как источник чувства контроля в жизни", "Религия как источник чувства общности", "Религия как источник чувства комфорта", "Религия как источник структурирования жизни".

Ключевые слова: религиозная борьба, верования и поведение в деле, религиозность.

Introduction. The problem of religious coping is new in domestic psychology, but it has been examined much in foreign researches. In our opinion religiousness may be considered as a way of coping with the stress.

Coping behavior is a strategy of action to eliminate, reduce the stress event; it is an adaptive and mature behavior of the subject, manifested in the cognitive, emotional and behavioral spheres and has its own dynamic structure, realizing the personal goals [1].

H. W. Krohne has shown, that all theories that focus on the specific relationship between external demands (stressors) and bodily processes (stress) can be grouped in two different categories: 1) approach to “systemic stress” based in physiology and psychobiology and concern stress as stress state manifested by a syndrome which consists of all the nonspecifically induced changes in a biologic system (H. Selye); and 2) approach to psychological stress developed within the field of cognitive psychology (R. Lazarus, S. Folkman, J. McGrath), in which stress refers to a relationship with the environment that the person appraises as significant for his or her well-being and in which the demands tax or exceed available coping resources [4].

H. Selye's response-based physiological theory of stress includes conditioning, eustress, and psychological factors such as cognitions and emotions. According to Selye's theory psychological factors were probably the most important activators of the stress response in humans, but that study of these factors was outside his area of expertise [14].

Individual differences in people's responses to stressful events is an integral part of Lazarus' theory. Psychological factors, such as thoughts and emotions, are a central part of Lazarus' relational model. According to S. Folkman and R. Lazarus [7, p. 223], coping is “the cognitive and behavioral efforts made to master, tolerate, or reduce external and internal demands and conflicts among them”.

Psychologists distinguish terms the religiousness and the religiosity. The first may be considered as the interaction of the three components – affective (religious feelings), cognitive (religious beliefs and representations) and behavioral (religious acts, moral behavior) [1]. The second suggests a theological and social structure that may or may not serve as a vehicle for the exploration of «the way in which people understand their lives in view of their ultimate meaning and value» [8, p.1604]. Religiosity is the degree to which a person accepts/practices a particular religious belief or the strength of an individual's religious faith. Religiousness – the quality of being religious or accepting and practicing religious beliefs [5].

The one of the most important components of religiousness is religious coping, which is the use of cognitive or behavioral techniques in times of stress that arise from one's religious or spiritual beliefs [15]. Religion has been found to serve many different functions in coping, e.g. reduction of anxiety, finding of

meaning [12], and personal growth [13]. Religion is an individual's attempt to hold onto or sustain the sense of meaning, control, comfort etc. in the midst of stressful situations [11].

Religious coping is activated when a stressor related to a sacred goal arises, or when a coping method that is considered sacred is used in response to a stressor [9]. K. Pargament and his colleagues identified five functions of religious coping with stressful events. The first function is meaning: religious beliefs provide a context for meaning in life and a way to interpret challenging experiences. The second is control, and refers to gaining the upper hand and mastery in an otherwise overwhelming situation. Third, religious coping provides comfort in one's desire to connect with a power greater than oneself, which in turn reduces dread and apprehension. Fourth, religious coping fosters a sense of connectedness and solidarity with others, and gives people a social identity. Finally, the ultimate goal of religious coping is transformation. It motivates individuals to change what matters in their lives and to find "a new source of significance" [9].

Religion as a coping has plenty of functions such as «structure», which refers to the various aspects of organized religion that create a structured environment for its followers, e.g. rules, rituals, etc, «sense of community», which addresses the social support network offered by many organized religions, «moral code», which refers to the set of rules associated with a religion that are meant to guide a person's actions, «acceptance», which speaks to the sense of belonging and acceptance offered by a personal relationship with a higher power etc. [5].

The **aim** of the article is a standardization of the questionnaire of religious copings for the evaluation of religious beliefs and behavior in coping with stress.

Research methods. *Assessment of Beliefs and Behaviors in Coping* (original adaptation) [3]. According to the different scientific views to religion as a mean to overcome the stress and to the psychological functions of religion (offering a sense of community, providing a worldview that makes sense of life, allowing for a personal relationship with a higher power, providing overall structure in everyday life) we had chosen from few research methods such as «Religious Coping Activities Scale» (K.I. Pargament, H.G.Koenig, L. Perez) [10], «Religious problem solving scales: short form inventory» [10], «Assessment of Beliefs and Behaviors in Coping» [5] the last one, translated it in Ukrainian and adapted.

Results and discussion. In accordance with the first task of the study, standardization of the questionnaire of religious copings was carried out. The psychometric sample included 465 people, among whom 239 subjects refer

themselves to atheists and agnostics, 126 to Orthodox, 20 to Catholics, 55 to Muslims, and 25 to representatives of other faiths.

Reliability of the questionnaire. The first step in processing the raw data received was to check the internal consistency of the questionnaire. The Cronbach's alpha statistics were calculated for a scale that includes all 20 points. The value of the Cronbach's alpha for a scale of 20 items was 0,930, which is below the acceptable level of 0.7.

Constructive validity of the questionnaire. We use factor analysis to detect the internal structure of the questionnaire. As a result of exploitative factor analysis (with angular rotation) we found six factors that were not correlated with each other (0,007-0,016).

Factor 1 (18,10% of dispersion) created by the points: 4, 12, 15, 11 (presented in descending order of factor load). The content of the items that formed this factor (for example, item 12 «Religious and spiritual practices can help me cope with stress by offering me unconditional acceptance of myself through relationship with a higher power») indicates that it can be designated as a factor of *religion as a source of personal relationship with a higher power*.

Factor 2 (15,34% of dispersion) includes items 19, 9, 10, 16 (also presented in descending order of factor load). The psychological content of the points that formed this factor (the most significant item is 19 with the highest load (0,813) «Religious and spiritual practices can help me cope with stress by giving life a sense of meaning») is that it reflects the *religion as a source of worldview that makes sense of life*.

Factor 3 (10,71% of dispersion) presented by the following items: 17, 18, 20. The psychological content of the statements that formed this factor (the most significant item is 17 with the highest load (0,739) «Religious and spiritual practices can help me cope with stress by offering a sense of control in life») is that it reflects *religion as a source of a sense of control in life*.

Factor 4 (10,13% of dispersion) combined the following items: 8, 5, 6, 7 (also listed in descending order of factor load). The psychological content of the points that formed this factor (indicative is the item 8 with the highest load (0,671), «Religious and spiritual practices can help me cope with stress by providing a religious community to belong to»), is that it reflects *religion as a source of a sense of community*.

Factor 5 (9,93% of dispersion) combined the following items: 3, 2, 1 (also listed in descending order of factor load). The psychological content of the points that formed this factor (indicative is the 3d item with the highest load (0,571), «Religious and spiritual practices can help me cope with stress by providing a daily routine»), is that it reflects *religion as a source of a sense of structure*.

Factor 6 (7,73% of dispersion) combined the following items: 13, 14 (also listed in descending order of factor load). Indicative is the 13th item with the highest load (0,526), «Religious and spiritual practices can help me cope with stress providing comfort through a relationship with a higher power», is that it reflects *religion as a source of a sense of comfort*.

Thus, the final version of the questionnaire «Assessment of Beliefs and Behaviors in Coping» represented by scales – 1) religion as a source of a sense of structure (4 items), 2) religion as a source of worldview that makes sense of life (4 items), 3) religion as a source of a sense of control in life (3 items), 4) religion as a source of a sense of community (4 items), 5) religion as a source of a sense of comfort (3 items), 6) religion as a source of personal relationship with a higher power (2 items). The adapted technique meets the modern requirements for psychometric substantiation of personal questionnaires.

Test-retest reliability of the questionnaire. Repeated testing of one and the same sample (185 people) was conducted at intervals of three weeks. The correlation between the results of the first and second tests was at the level of $r=0,713$, which indicates a sufficiently high test-retest reliability of the questionnaire.

Normative scale. In table 1 the descriptive statistics of «Assessment of Beliefs and Behaviors in Coping» are set.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics of «Assessment of Beliefs and Behaviors in Coping»

Indicators	Mean	Min	Max	Std. dev
Religion as a source of a sense of structure	10,31	4,00	16,00	4,32
Religion as a source of a sense of community	11,33	4,00	16,00	4,25
Religion as a source of a sense of comfort	6,91	3,00	9,00	4,20
Religion as a source of worldview that makes sense of life	8,82	4,00	16,00	3,89
Religion as a source of a sense of control in life	7,27	3,00	9,00	2,10
Religion as a source of personal relationship with a higher power	5,25	2,00	8,00	1,06

Dividing into three intervals the marginal values of the norm for the indicators of the 1st, 2d and 4th scales are 8-12 points, the marginal values for the 3d and 5th scales are 5-7 points, for the 6th scale are 3-6 points.

Psychological sense of scales. *Structure* refers to the various aspects of organized religion that create a structured environment for its followers, e.g. rules, rituals, etc. *Sense of community* addresses the social support network offered by many organized religions. Religion as a source of worldview that

makes sense of life provides a worldview that makes sense of life and providing a helpful way to view the world. *Religion as a source of a sense of comfort* provides comfort through a relationship with a higher power. *Religion as a source of personal relationship with a higher power* provides communication and connection with God as a coping with stress. Religion as a source of a sense of control in life offers a sense of control in life as a coping.

Convergent and discriminant validity of «Assessment of Beliefs and Behaviors in Coping» checked out by identifying the correlation between the indicators of religious coping and the indicators of the ways of coping (convergent validity), and indicators of Brief RCOPE (discriminant validity).

Correlations were obtained with the Revised Ways of Coping (R-WOC; Lazarus & Folkman). The Revised Ways of Coping (Russian-language version, adapted by T.L. Kryukova, E.V. Kuftyak, M.S. Zamyshlyayeva) is a 50-item checklist covering a wide range of coping strategies relevant to a stressful situation. Subjects indicate on a 4-point scale (0=does not apply, 3=used a great deal) which coping strategies they used during a stressful situation [6].

There is a positive correlation between Religion as a source of a sense of structure and Positive revaluation ($r=0,35$, $p<0,0001$). Indicators of Religion as a source of worldview that makes sense of life also have connection with Positive revaluation ($0,28$, $p<0,001$). Overcoming negative feelings in connection with the problem due to its positive rethinking, considering it as an incentive for personal growth is a characteristic of people who use religion as a source of a sense of structure, which refers to the various aspects of organized religion that create a structured environment for its followers, e.g. rules, rituals, etc. The orientation toward the transpersonal, philosophical comprehension of the problem situation, its inclusion in the broader context of the work of the individual over self-development is characteristic are associated with striving to find structure of everyday life by religious means.

There is a positive correlation between Religion as a source of a sense of community and Finding social support ($r=0,42$, $p<0,0001$). Solving the problem by attracting external (social) resources, searching for information, emotional and effective support characterize people who strive to finding social and psychological support in religious communities. Religion as a source of a sense of community characterized by the focus on interaction with other people, the expectation of support, attention, advice, empathy, concrete effective help.

Indicators of Religion as a source of a sense of comfort correlate with Escape-avoidance ($r=0,41$, $p<0,0001$). Religion as a source of personal relationship with a higher power also has connection with Escape-avoidance ($r=0,31$, $p<0,0001$). Overcoming the negative experiences through the denial of the problem, fantasy, unjustified expectations, distraction are characteristics of people who use religion a source of a sense of comfort and as a source of per-

sonal relationship with a higher power. This kind of infantile behaviors can be observed in stressful situations and are connected with using religion for achievement of emotional comfort and the way they can speak to God.

Religion as a source of a sense of control in life correlates with Self-monitoring ($r=0,22, p<0,01$). Overcoming negative feelings in connection with the problem through the purposeful suppression and restraint of emotions reveals in people who usually find the feeling of life control through religion. Minimizing the impact on the perception of the situation and making choice of behavior strategy with high control, striving for self-control are the features of using religion as a resource of control of living.

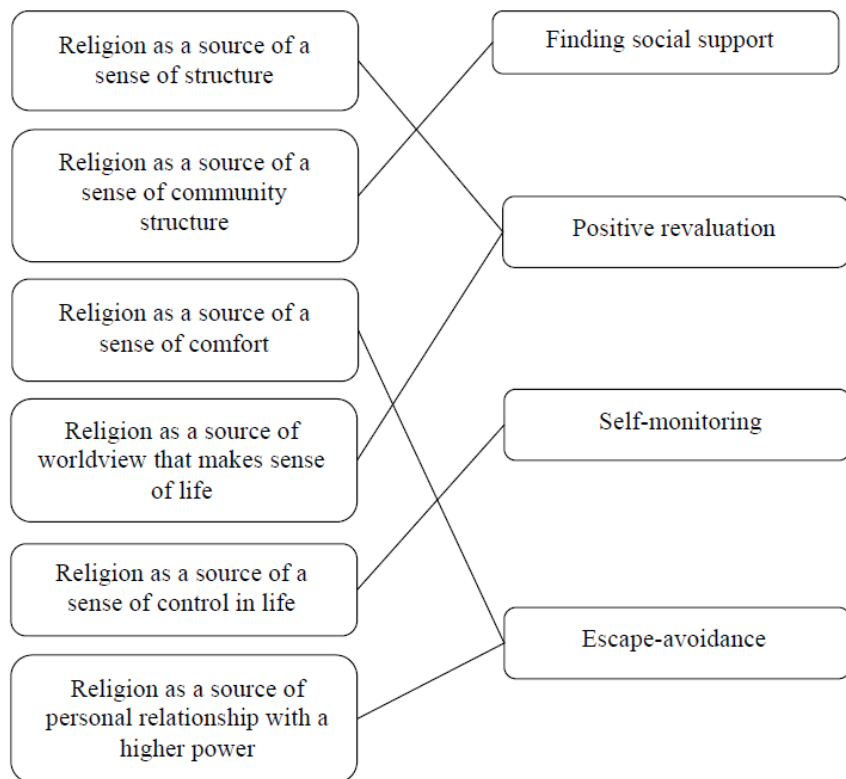


Fig. 1. Correlations between coping strategies and religious Beliefs and Behaviors in Coping.

There are no correlations between indicators of Beliefs and Behaviors in Coping and indicators of Brief RCOPE [5]. Neither positive, nor negative religious coping strategies correlate with Beliefs and Behaviors in Coping.

Conclusions. The adaptation of Assessment of Beliefs and Behaviors in Coping has shown its validity and reliability. The scales of religious copings have been obtained, namely: “Religion as a source of personal relationship with a higher power”, “Religion as a source of worldview that makes sense of life”, “Religion as a source of a sense of control in life”, “Religion as a source of a sense of community”, “Religion as a source of a sense of community”, “Religion as a source of a sense of comfort”.

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